

Reflections

'99

A Literary Journal of Gardner-Webb University

Reflections

Volume 31
1999

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Special thanks to:

Susan Carlisle Bell, Director of Art Contest
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Steve Varley and Kathy Martin,
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Reflections is a publication of the Department of English
at Gardner-Webb University,
Boiling Springs, North Carolina.

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Poetry Contest

Each year, the English Department of Gardner-Webb University sponsors a poetry contest for students in conjunction with the publication of Reflections. This year, awards were given to three students whose work was judged excellent. All works were judged anonymously. This year's poetry judges were Matt Theado, Susan Bunn, and Darlene Gravett.

Poetry Awards:

First Place:	<i>Christina Whitehouse,</i>	"Untitled"
Second Place:	<i>Lori Moore,</i>	"Blank"
Third Place:	<i>Kime Lawson,</i>	"Untitled"
Honorable		
Mention (Tie):	<i>Starr Gist,</i>	"Memories"
	<i>Miriam M. Oviedo,</i>	"El Shaddai"

Art Contest

Each year, the Art Department of Gardner-Webb University sponsors an art contest for undergraduate students who have submitted work to be included in Reflections. The art judges were Susan Carlisle Bell, Beth Senger-Knotts, and Noel Manning II.

Art Awards:

First Place:	<i>Mary Jones and Miranda Potts (Tie)</i>
Second Place:	<i>Angie Hendricks</i>
Third Place:	<i>Anna Marie Martin</i>
Honorable	
Mention:	<i>Efrem Tekie</i>

Photography Contest

This year, the Communication Studies Department sponsored a contest for undergraduate students' submissions of photography. The winning photos are published in this issue.

Photography Awards:

First Place:	<i>John Durham</i>
Second Place:	<i>Ashlie Pence</i>
Third Place:	<i>Brianne Taylor</i>
Honorable	
Mention:	<i>Brianne Taylor</i>

Dear readers,

As a lover, and a writer, of poetry, I appreciate open interpretation and free thought. The expression of poetry is, for the most part, an outpouring of the soul, divergent from the norms of a conforming society and an escape from convention and monotony. Poetry is meant to give the mind wings, allowing “flights of fancy” and the experience of grandeur that can only be captured in the imagination. For this reason, I believe that you will find this publication of Reflections to be both enlightening and elusive, spellbinding and tranquil, captivating and freeing. It is certainly our most diverse publication to date, ranging from the simple and straightforward to the thought-provoking and disturbing. Our themes encompass such issues as Christianity, homesickness, native heritage, classroom anecdotes, and prejudice. With the herculean efforts of the staff and the superb submissions by faculty, students, and community members, the 1999 publication is a work of art to be proud of. I would like to thank Jennifer Carlile for giving me the opportunity to be the editor, and for helping me strive for greater poetry within myself; I would also like to thank all the people who helped us put this together. I hope you enjoy this year’s issue of Reflections, and remember - be true to the art within your own soul!

Your editor,

Jayne Helmick

El Shaddai

I am a rose upon the ground,
a wave across the sea
I am the eye that sees all things
the heat upon your skin
I am the stars that light the heavens
the reflection of the moon you see
I am the cry of an owl
the whispers of the wind
I am the comet that comes down
the eagle that does not fall
I am the bird that flies through wonders
the fish that secrets keep
I am the spirit that has set you free
the soul that lives eternally
I am the hands that rock you asleep
the fingers that wipe your tears
I am the song that has no words
the voice inside your all
I am the beauty only you possess
the source that gives you strength
I am the ocean that unites the rivers
the aurora that gathers hope
I am who I am, said the Lord,
God Almighty,
El Shaddai.

Miriam M. Oviedo

Curious

The way I wish to read your thoughts brings my pen
To life. All along, you have
no thought,
no idea,
no epiphany out of the blue
of just how much your words
Undulate in my mind -
moving and breaking,
tearing down and making me
Me.

Carla Catoe



Brianne Taylor

I Forgive You

I see you across campus and wonder how you are.
Not really of your daily well-being but
of the situation you have labeled a struggle.
I pity the fact that you have put
on a facade just for acceptance.
You've succumbed to an easier life.
What is life if not a challenge?
You can try to run away from yourself
but where ever you run, there you will be.
The words of hatred you shot to me
have ricocheted off me and it hurts you to see
that my shoes are just your size.
Go on submitting to society
and see how much regard they really have for you.
All in all for the actions you've shown to me of beating
yourself up
through me, I forgive you.

Neil Velez

In the light of Sergei Grinkov

Young Sergei, why were you swept out the door?
Leaving a few triple salchows short in life.
The height of your excellence did not end that final day,
Your partner climbing the icy steps alone.

Young Sergei, why should your death bother me?
A young American girl,
Knowing you only through fame,
Yet so troubled by your exit.

Perhaps I fear that I will have your fate,
To work so hard trying to succeed
Only to find
Fortune ending much too soon.

Young Sergei, I have strived to be myself for years,
No advertisements, just the outline of who I really am,
But when my last day comes, young Sergei,
Will my fate be true to me?

Mary E. Gettys

“I think that we are all eggs,”
 he said
And cracked in my palm.
 I smiled gently
And placed him
 (or what was left . . .)
into a bowl on my shelf,
Determined to use him . . .
 later.
Only to return a day later
 And find him . . .
Rotten
And stinking up my kitchen.

Christina Whitehouse

The Day After the Night I Dreamed I Married Elton John

An average morning
after a strange night of dreaming
that Grandpa married Daddy, Grandma married Daddy,
and I married Elton John.

Running to meet a friend,
we enjoyed a casual picnic
by the lake sharing
funny stories like how I married Elton.

The next thing I knew
a kiss, flirty glances, and fake caviar,
wait!
Is he Elton?

Only a dream about Elton the night before,
yet it is the same as
my picnic love –
pure fiction.

Mary E. Gettys

i'm not your dream anymore

the words you spoke
were so sweet
dew
on yellow roses

now those same words
sting
the dew has turned
to venom

i'm glad you don't call
i'm not your dream
anymore
and i'm thankful

you didn't have any right
to talk so sweet

i wonder if you say
those same words
to her

oh the sweet blade
of the knife
it cuts me open
every time i remember

it's over
and i'm
thankful

Lori Moore



Angie Hendricks



Miranda Potts

Farewell to the Future

She indulges in the moment
Where everyone is in the past
And she reaches through the time zones
To bring back something that will last.

The present is a piece of glass
A blurry one without reflection -
Her future - endless reruns
Of a past without perfection.

To look at her, she's beautiful
But to look into her eye
You'll see the statues of stone-frozen figures
Who will never, ever die.

She's almost seventy years old now
And she still combs her dolly's hair.
She likes to hold the ghost hand
Of the father that was never there.

She plants flowers in her garden
And waits for seeds to grow
And when the petals open,
They put on quite a lovely show.
Counterclockwise is her watch;
Yesterday she can't recall -
She lives her life in a picture frame
Without living life at all.

Jonathon Allen

Interpretations of
cascading dreams
Blinding performances
of unspent youth
A rhythm older
than time
A liturgy of strange
disturbances
Such a spectacle
of gyration
Freud would have
a field day
Thrusting accompaniment
Love that music
I don't believe it -
Paul Newman
in his prime!

Jayme Helmick

An Autumn Outlook

A solitary romance hangs in the autumn twilight
 lingering...
in the night sky mingled with auburn and brown
 against the aging distant horizon.
 Emptiness waits in a graying pruned tree,
 dying bark, wrinkling in absence.
The breeze serenades the arrival of love's loss
 as Death Winter comes a caller.

Jeremy Absher

blank

i smell the air
salt
sand squeezes between my toes
i didn't invite it
but it is more than welcome

this place
i hold it
captured
somewhere between
last years grocery list
and today's idea for a painting

how i remember the many days
my hands felt like they were shriveling
from swimming for hours

i can smell coconut
and hear music

my castle fell
the blue tide washed it away

the salty smell
lingers and drifts

Lori Moore

blu

bottles
butterflies
birds
ink
blazers
basketballs
blankets

Lori Moore

burrowing into a spirit of fear, hands drip mud clots
as dirt mingles with blood and the soup of the day
is rotting vegan godflesh again

i pursue a portable nietzsche
in a barrel of regret and the horses (!),
oh the horses! cast my cares upon their necks
and surrender to insanity's cold french kisses

then the breach! my cool dirt cave collapses
and my pale eyes fail at the bright light of daybreak.
but now i know that the world is truly blue like an orange.

Kime Lawson



Ashlie Pence

Rosewood

What I saw tonight my eyes will never share.
Innocent victims,
Scattered bodies,
Screaming children.

I wish I could have helped
I so felt their pain.
History is so damned non-negotiable
once writ.

What if I were there?
Their destiny,
would it be the same?

Unshed tears,
my vision blurred.
What could I have done?

The powerful and strong
why were they spared?
Children dead, frozen in youth,
forever gone.

My heart hurts,
pounding in my chest.
It questions yesterday for being so
unfair.

Starr Gist

A Toast to Grace

A chalice lifted high in the presence of many
A toast proposed, "To grace." The crowd
confirmed, "Here, here." Behind the
ringing of glass could be heard a
faint trickle as each did sip
of the pleasing potion
of poison.
It was
a subtle
seduction
by the sweet
elixir the warm tingling delight of drunkenness
the hypnotic swaying delusion of escape that ended
harshly in sin's slow rigor mortis of despair and death.

Jeremy Absher

Morgan's Quilts

(for Dr. Robert Morgan)

There's something special about Morgan's quilts.
The fabrics blend like a romantic rendezvous,
colors race like a comet in some or
stand like still water in others.
Like a gypsy, patterns dance or
sing of lullaby in a windy whisper.
It's hard to pick a favorite,
I like them all because they fit my moods.
Each quilt has a story, a life,
and feverishly pulls its own history
methodically before your eyes.
Thread by thread united in oneness by love
and a gift of warmth and reminiscent charm,
bits of cloth join as if born into a family,
never judging but giving.
Disregarding color and nationality
to be shaped by Morgan's hands into art
that God wills because much is required
of those that much is given and Morgan is a giver.
Yes, there's something special about Morgan's quilts
and only he can tell their stories.

Karen Jones



John Durham

Love's Photo Shoot

What?

No more pictures?

Only thirty-thousand from four frustrating years
shining in the shadow of lost love.

Each photo waited to be developed
into the intimate light of romance.

A black-and-white argument, the night of terror,
Followed by color prints of hugs and special moments
together.

One day the film will be dead forever.

Why break the camera this way?

Two more rolls and our time is complete.

No more pictures?

Can we really say "cheese"?

Mary E. Gettys

Without a Net

There I go
Trying to predict
The Unpredictable
After flat tires
Food stamps
and bent burgundy metal
I'm putting words in Your mouth
As though I had a say
Trying to listen to myself
At the end of the day
But my words are dusty
And dry
And all the wisdom I call my own
Is just the lie
That I can predict
The Unpredictable
That I know more than You
And that what I want
Is a justifiable thing to do
But when I look at the words
And I look at the sky
When I look in the mirror
Look in my eye
I know that I cannot predict
The Unpredictable
So I will live without a net
And trust You to catch me
And You will be
Who You will be

C. Allen

A Stranger

My eyes are dark brown,
like the color of a warrior's stare.
My nose is the mixture of a Maya, an Aztec,
or maybe even a white man.
My mouth a cherry color,
my skin a golden glare,
My pride unmeasurable,
my pain unfair.
I could have been a queen,
but instead I was made a slave.
I could have passed on my traditions,
but they were stolen from my hands.
One day I was found a treasure,
the next I was buried again.
Now I am just a stranger
in some unknown place.

Miriam M. Oviedo



Brianne Taylor

Wish

I sometimes wish, though only to myself, that I could
swim back to the island in my heart.

The island, where some may never leave, though they
grow old, on the outside.

The island, where truth is always something good.

The 2-dimensional world where I held my father's
hand, while we crossed the busy street.

I could cry, and be allowed to fear, giggle at silly
jokes, and my mother, always ready for a hug, smiles
freely.

Why must we leave our safe solitude, where living and
happiness go together, to venture into the rough
waves and find what we really shouldn't have to
know?

I wish to not be set, though we all are, in this hopeless,
desperate situation.

If we never leave, we'll die of thirst, if we go too soon
we'll be pulled under the roaring waves.

So we must leave the colorful island and make it to the
land of solemn faces and broken hearts and proper
names and bitter tongues and try to make it better,
try to not accept but truly understand what we
swam our ocean of fear and truth to know.

Maybe to only add a bit of sunshine a little
rainbow, to life.

Sasha Habel

The Old Place

Mysteries
of the past are buried here.
Truths of torment
manifested here.

Looking at the walls,
wondering whose blood left this stain?
Whose heart spilled such pain?

The carpet, tattered and faded
a reservoir of many tears.

The ceiling,
cracked and aging,
beckons the future,
retains tomorrow.

Cabinets,
mouths open wide,
yield forth their dusty contents.

Spider webs,
forming labyrinths.
Dust balls clustered into gardens.

Mildew decorates the furniture.
Its odor is fog in the air.

Insects,
rodents
everything
has come here to
die,
Their decomposing carcasses
scattered in corners.

Starr Gist

The Names Have Been Changed

Before she partakes of harvest

Jane asks,

with head

w

o e

b d

For God's blessing on her

tuna salad sandwich

and

ridged potato chips.

On her tongue, their salt

mixes with chlorine

ice

water.

And reminds her of those lonely

liquids

which compose 75% of her,

the rest of us.

Bless my mother,

my father,

my brother,

Bless.

Bless

me,

God.

Christina Whitehouse

Almost in English

In the evening breeze blowing up
From the stillness of the lake
In the creaking and the cracking
Of every heart that breaks
Beneath the echoes that return
From within these canyon walls
Beneath the ache-filled sighs
Of every three a.m. call
In the shape-shifting clouds that rise
From the valleys running through these hills
In the whispering and the clattering
Of rain on my window sill
In the salt-stained trail
Of every errant tear
Almost in English
Your voice I hear

C. Allen

Esfrem Tekie

yesterday
i watched truth whisked away
gone with the wind
sherman's burning
my ivory tower
burning an effigy
on white sands
of time ticktocking
gone away
i'll never see daybreak here.

Kime Lawson

Everywhere he walked there was a cloud overhead.
His prime was years past.
Every step on a walkway, a cliff
Every simple task seemed impossible.
As the cars pass by with a whirl
The noises are either too loud or too soft.
All he wants to do is to do something
He wants to get the job done, and not watch others do it
And in his loneliness he heard the voice of his mother
“If you can’t run with the Big Dawgs get to where you
can.”

Clay Gardner

Key

There is a key
That few find
Along the path
Of the wise

Many view it
But don't see
It or don't know
Where the door lies

While they look
But don't profit
From the truth
Of where they stand

Some turn mad
Others leave
Few fall down
But never land

Sasha Habel



Anna Marie Martin

The Desert in North Carolina

Walking home one night,
it seemed as though I'd walked much further than a half
mile.

The crisp breeze on my face and
the clear night with glittering stars
took me to a far away place.

The smell of the sagebrush and cow dung
and the scraggly grass crunching under my feet
made it seem almost as if I were in the Nevada desert.
The dirt was red instead of an alkali-filled khaki,
But lack of rain had given it a dusty desert-like
appearance.

A swift gust of wind lifted the dust into a mini-tornado, a
dust devil,
and it pelted me with tiny grains of dust and stung on my
skin.

The sounds of coyotes echoed an eerie cry in my ears.
Shivering, I closed my eyes in Nevada, and I opened them
in
North Carolina.

Rich Cox

Rendezvous

The wind and I were restless
last night,
Passing the darkened hours
together.
Lulls were softly quiet
and still...
Once I heard a rooster
crowing.
Stars watched.

Eunice Sharpe Simmons

Moonlight

Moonlight
Shines coldly white
Into my room.

The three-quarter moon
Is a great luminous pearl
Against black velvet skies.

Eunice Sharpe Simmons

In The Dark

A laugh
A grunt
A growl
A sneer
A young man yells,
“You nasty queer!”
A flying fist is all I see
a spurt of blood comes out of me.
Too dark to see. No breath to yell
on cold concrete. What in gay hell?
My heart throbs in my blood drenched ears
my teeth clench down on tongue and tears.
I pray to be numbed by the freezing rain.
While channel surfing thoughts dance in my brain.
Christians, Republicans, Nazis, oh my!
Will they leave me here to die?
My So Called Life, Spin City, and Ellen
Fast forward through all my head is swelling.
Robert Stack announces my death
I click it off and restore my breath.
Action Nine can’t hear about this
They’re running off but one thing I didn’t miss.
The wrist of one of them I happened to see
had a bracelet with 4 letters, WWJD.

Neil Velez

Fatigue

Eagerly reaching for angelic unconsciousness

I embrace the subterfuge of sleep

I climb up on clouds of forgetfulness

And sink into velvety depths of fluff

I float along the breeze of dreams

And smile at their absurdity

Silence envelopes me like a blanket

While the outside world knocks at my door

I ignore their entreaty

And snuggle deeper into myself

How blissful! How innocent!

Such a vulnerable state am I in

That I let down my defenses

And become again like a child

Palm open beside my cheek

Trusting that I will remain safe

In solitude

But the knocking is louder, insistent

Finally jarring me out of my peacefulness

Pulling me away from desired absence

I blink at my unfocused surroundings

And hear the drone of an old professor

I've failed again

Lost the battle

and my head falls back to my desk.

Jayme Helmick

Memories

My teachers are Ms. Potter and Ms. Daniels.

Ms. Potter wears funny, little red shoes,
with polka dots.

Ms. Daniels is always serious,
she calls my daddy when I
am too loud and t-a-l-k-a-t-i-v-e.

My classroom is like the big tent at the circus.

Everything is everywhere.

My favorite place is the
block
station.

There are colors for everything in the world.

Daddy sometimes calls mommy blue black

I am pecan brown.

My blocks are purple, yellow, red
green, and
black.

There is a train on the
wall, my letter is the s,

soup
slurpy
sweet
and snow.

I
Smell like crayons and play dough,
Ms. Daniels say.
Tim
smell like dirt.
My mommy say kids don't supposed to smell
like nothing
but baby fresh. I sometimes
smell like mama's strawberry lip gloss!

I'm giggling,
Ann is trying to color her Barbie brown
Barbies ain't brown.

Starr Gist



Marydean Jones

oh! i ran into faith, hope, and love -
shopping: mallrats seeking the half-off
soul sale of the century -
arrayed in most glamorous garments.
“versace?” i asked.
“no, plato,” they replied.
and i stood puzzled thinking,
“surely a wise man wouldn’t have
fashioned such finery.”

Kime Lawson

Walking through the woods,
with footprints in the sand,
a squirrel bit my leg.
Then suddenly,
I was fishing by the pond.
Children with masks were running
into fish.
I looked into the sky,
and a cloud whirled over me.
A voice like my mother's said,
"Don't count your chickens before Tuesday."

Brian Childers